

## **What to Know Before You Volunteer**

Want to get involved with the ASD as a volunteer? We're so glad! Animals need your help. To help ensure you have the best experience possible—and that your valuable time helps animals in the best way possible—dig into these tips and suggestions. We can't wait to meet you.

First, carefully consider your decision to help out. Do you have the time? What level of commitment are you prepared to make?

Then spend some time thinking about what you hope to gain out of your volunteer effort. Whether it's professional experience or simply enjoying the satisfaction of a job well done, it's important to identify your goals so you can learn whether the opportunities you're exploring are designed to help you meet them.

Consider the characteristics of your ideal volunteer placement: Do you prefer to do hands-on animal care or behind-the-scenes administrative work? Do you want to work with a group of people or on projects by yourself? Do you like structure? Do you prefer a learning environment where you can gain new skills or do you prefer to use the skills you already have? Spending time considering these factors will help you determine which of the options you're considering will be the best fit.

Regardless of the type of opportunity you choose, it's important that you make a fully-informed decision and are able to meet the requirements and the commitment being asked of volunteers. Great volunteers are essential to programs that engage them. They're also prompt, committed, and focused on the organization's needs. Valuable volunteers also follow rules, follow through, and communicate effectively.